

Professional Blogging Roadmap

How to Achieve Your Business Goals With New Media

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Introduction

People in small businesses of all kinds are coming into the internet space at record speed. I get a lot of inquiries about blogging and social networking, so I decided to write this report to cover some of the basics.

If you are in a small business of some kind or are considering starting a business, this report is written specifically for you.

I network every day with real estate salespeople, lenders, network marketers and other direct salespeople, affiliate marketers and professionals in many other fields as well.

These groups all have three things in common:

1. They understand that they need to make sales to make money.
2. They know the internet is a powerful tool to expand their reach and make more sales.
3. They're not really sure how to get started or how to get the best results with internet marketing.

If this describes you at all, this report will give you everything you need to get started. Additionally, visit my [blog](#) and [contact me](#) if you have any questions. There are many free articles for you to check out there as well.

I have also included an entire section of additional resources and reading for you to absorb as well at the end of this report. This report really will cover all the basics for you, and by following through on the additional resources I've included, it will take you as far as you want to go into some intermediate and advanced content as well.

I do [consulting work](#) with professionals to help them with their internet marketing efforts, and I also provide free content and resources every day on my blog to help as much as I can in this field. If you have any questions or concerns about this business, I'd love to hear from you!

Who am I?

My name is Christian Russell. I've been in sales for 10 years at this point, and I've been doing business online for 6 years. From internet stores, blogs, niche marketing, Ebay sales and more, I've pretty much done it all. I've worked online full time for the past 3 years, and I've never looked back.

My experience in sales started with door to door sales, and then I moved on to real estate. I've been the #1 salesperson in my division out of 1500 sales professionals, a stat I proudly share with the great Zig Ziglar. I've been a top sales trainer, ranked #1 in the US, #2 in North America. Today, I do most of my business online, and I am still an active Realtor and am involved in the real estate business.

I have a passion for internet business, because it's enabled me to earn good money while maintaining an unparalleled amount of control over my schedule. I make more per hour than I've ever earned, because I've learned to develop systems that literally make money for me around the clock, whether I'm working or not.

This isn't "guru talk". I'm not a multimillionaire (yet, of course!) , and I'm not going to say you'll make millions overnight doing this. But you CAN massively grow your business, get more control over your time, make money 24/7 and a lot more, and I WILL show you everything I do on a day to day basis to make it happen.

I hope this report helps you get started and inspired. It will evolve over time, but what you have in front of you will probably be around 20 pages or so. This is NOT comprehensive! It's a *start-up* guide. It's a *no-B.S.* start up guide also; don't expect any blown-up promises or false claims.

I've consulted with and trained over a thousand sales people over the years, and I've learned that you never get good results by giving someone a false impression of what they're up against. I give you the straight facts. And if you aren't scared off by what I have to tell you, then you clearly have what it takes to be successful in this!

And let me tell you...the rules are changing! There has never been a better time for you to be learning this stuff. The old rules of marketing...whatever you're doing NOW to market your business, isn't working. Not like it used to anyway. I guarantee it. You're are wasting time and money! That's at least one reason (hopefully) you're reading this, and I want you to know I understand where you're coming from!

As I've mentioned, I have experience in real estate, and a lot of the people in my network are real estate professionals. That (as is the case in MANY businesses these days) is an industry that is undergoing massive change. Realtors are reinventing how they look at their businesses and how they can market themselves effectively.

Congratulations to all of you who are reading this report and looking for ways to improve what you do! Constant education, consultation and reinventing yourself are the order of the day, and those of us who are willing to do this work are going to be the ones who thrive in this new economy.

Here to help,



Christian Russell

Next Level Blogger

The Fantastically Simple Rules of Blogging for Business Success!

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Please Redistribute

I want to encourage you to redistribute this report to anyone you know who may benefit from it. I give it out freely to anyone who asks, so I hope you will do the same. Email it, upload it, use it as a premium on your own site...whatever you like. Just leave it in it's current, unaltered form. Thanks!

Why Blogging is Mandatory

First of all, it's important I start with the basics. I honestly believe that blogging and social networking is *mandatory* for small business success. I don't use the word "mandatory" lightly. I understand what it means! It means you **HAVE** to be online in a big way, or else you will not make it long term. These are strong words; I understand, but it's essential for me to speak plainly about the power of what we're discussing.

You **WILL** lose to your competition if you're not competitive, and your competition is online. So are your buyers. I understand this might sound crazy, but the fact is that nearly **ALL** of your customers are already online. And guess what...they're looking for you. And guess what else...they're *talking* about you! And if you're not there, you're essentially ignoring your customers. It's *that* important to maintain a strong, interactive presence online!

When it comes to opening a retail store, for example, we all know how essential it is to have a good location. A good location means you'll get a lot of quality traffic to your store...it's a prerequisite for success in retail. For *any* business going forward, the best location you can acquire is your own part of the internet space, because that's where all the traffic is.

Think about the basic way business works. You need to make sales, control your costs and get the maximum results from every marketing dollar. Correct? You need to reach the maximum number of prospects. You need to engage them all as effectively as possible, and you need to do it as cost-effectively as possible. **Let me show you why blogging and social networking will be your MOST effective marketing tools:**

- You will be able to reach an unprecedented number of people with your message.

- You will be able to expand almost without limit, because your online network is infinitely scalable.
- You will be able to reach customers that you never would have been able to reach before.
- As market conditions change, you will be able to turn on a dime, responding to new demands. It will be hard work to reinvent yourself as the market requires it, but you will be able to keep up, because your marketing presence will be dynamic.
- You will have new ways of making money at your disposal that you may not have ever considered before (some of which I'll discuss in this report).
- You'll be able to launch products more quickly and effectively.
- You'll be able to gauge demand for product and service ideas very effectively and at *no cost*. This will enable you to sell more, because you will be creating products and services that are truly tailored to your customers' needs.
- You'll be able to get feedback from your customers and clients much more effectively (and for free), allowing you to get more referral business and improve the services you offer.
- You'll be able to manage your reputation and respond to complaints (and praise!) about you or your company quickly and efficiently.
- You will be able to engage your prospects on a whole new, personal level.

And these are just a FEW of the things a competent internet marketing plan will do for your business...

Basic logic will show you that if you have tools this powerful at your disposal, your competition is surely going to use them. Soon after that, your customers will come to expect this level of service. And soon, very soon, you will be obsolete if you're not using them also.

These Changes Shouldn't Surprise Us

Actually, we've seen this play out many times before. I understand that there is still a lot of resistance to start blogging and internet marketing. After all, it's a lot of work, there's an intimidating learning curve, and measuring the results of these activities is very different than traditional advertising.

Truth be told, these tools essentially require you to reinvent the way you look at your business, so being wary is very understandable. Just remember that reinvention is a GOOD thing, especially if it means dramatically reducing your marketing costs, improving your interaction with customers and making big improvements to your ROI across the board.

How have we seen this play out before? Since my greatest traditional business experience is in real estate, I will use it as an example. 10 years ago, there was scarcely a Realtor with a cell phone. Now, if you're in real estate and don't have a cell phone, you're a dinosaur.

Imagine working with a Realtor who didn't have a cell phone, internet access or a website. Why would you? What would be the point? They would essentially be completely useless to you. Yet not too long ago, Realtors didn't use ANY of these tools! None of them had any of these tools. Things have changed, haven't they?

Technology truly changes the landscape of business, and these changes are not slowing down. They're coming more and more quickly. We've seen it time and time again. We may look at things like a Twitter account, a blog and other internet marketing tools as superfluous right now, but trust me; in just a few years you will be out of business if you aren't on board.

I understand this charges you with some extra work. I understand this means some discomfort and having to learn a lot of new things. **But think of the benefits!** You are looking at tools that can massively IMPROVE your business, so why wouldn't you want to take advantage of them?

My goal in this section is to motivate you to see the huge importance of these tools and how much of a difference your mastery of these tools can mean for you and your business. I hope I've accomplished my goal. If you have any questions, [please let me know!](#)

How Much Time Will This Take?

I have a post on Next Level Blogger called [How Should Business Owners Approach Blogging?](#) It covers some good ideas regarding this issue. But for now, here's the deal: **blogging and social networking takes time**. There are a number of books, courses and gurus out there that will talk to you about how to set these things on autopilot. They will tell you that you can get huge results with blogging and social networking with just a few hours a week. I'm not going to tell you that.

First of all, you know it's not true, so I'm not going to waste your time! Second of all, it will be much more beneficial for us both if I'm just straight with you from the beginning. I do [consulting](#) and provide other services to business owners who want to get big results from their internet marketing.

What good would it do me or you for me to tell you that good results can be had for almost no effort? I'm only going to be disappointing you in the long run. My goal is always to under-promise and over-deliver. My clients value what I do, because I'm straight with them about how to get real results.

So what DOES it take to reach your goals with blogging and social networking? Think about it this way: what does it take to build a successful business of ANY kind? It takes this:

- Great ideas
- Huge value to the consumer
- Consistency
- Hard work
- Expertise

These are the kind of qualities necessary to be successful in any business endeavor. Internet marketing is no exception. I take the time to talk about this, because there is a prevailing mentality out there that tells us internet marketing is supposed to be easy. I'm not sure where it comes from, but it's just not true.

The fact is, this is good news. The reason it's good news...*great* news in fact...is because it goes to show that the internet space is just as real and viable a place to market your business as anywhere else.

There is huge power and leverage here to be had, and you can put all these tools to work for your business, but for some reason we want all this massive power AND for it to be exceedingly easy and free. Think about how ridiculous that is!

Yes, your blogging and social networking are going to take time. But if you put the work in (and I will show you how, step-by-step, starting here and continuing with my [blog](#), [consulting](#) and information products), your business will be transformed. It will be more effective, more profitable, more efficient.

If I had told you several years ago that I would take your business message and deliver it to thousands of people, that I would deliver the message instantly and that it would be very well-received by people who are eagerly anticipating hearing from you...and not only that, what if I said you could repeat this process and contact these people as many times as you wanted *every day*, and they would love you for it, they would buy from you and refer their friends to you without you even having to ask...what would you expect to have had to pay for that service? **Today, you can do it for free!**

But yes, you will first need to learn how to effectively use these tools! As business owners, our main concern is getting a good return on our time. In order to gain access to the power of worldwide leverage, new ways of making money and myriad improvements in efficiency, isn't the extra work worth it?

The Rewards of Blogging

Here is the biggest reward you'll get from blogging and social networking (and it might not be what you expect):

Exposure to new people and opportunities

Yes, you can make money blogging. You can sell things. You can promote your book, your business, your brand. New media offers immensely powerful tools to leverage yourself, and you can make money with them. That's kind of what [Next Level Blogger](#) is all about.

That said, I would be remiss to neglect mentioning the biggest value of what I've experienced throughout the process of building my business. And that real value is the intrinsic value of my network...the

people I've come to know and interact with daily. Also, the opportunities I'm presented with have been humbling and awesome.

I truly value the input I get from the people in my network, and the opportunities that you can open up through blogging and social networking are limitless. When people argue that they don't have time to blog, I honestly say I don't think you can afford not to...and this is the reason. Not the money you can make, although it's real. The real value of using these tools is beyond that. If I had to choose between a hundred thousand dollars or a hundred great quality business contacts, I'd choose the people every time. Which would you choose?

So while I do spend most of my time talking about the specifics of how to build a successful marketing tactic online and how to monetize the traffic you get, etc...I don't want this to detract from the fact that social networking and blogging are SOCIAL activities. Focus on the people, and the money will come.

We get into trouble when we focus solely on the money. We get into trouble when all we care about is getting a deal put together or closing the next sale. Yes, we all have to make money, but it's all too easy to forget that people are way more valuable than dollars.

The value of the sales you can get through blogging and social networking is huge, but the value of the network you can build is without limit. Now that I have explained that, here are a few more little thought of ways blogging can benefit your business.

Unprecedented Reach

This is an awesome benefit of blogging! It's so awesome that we've come to take it for granted, so my goal for this section is simple...to get you to simply appreciate what power you have at your fingertips! What would it cost for you to publish an article and distribute it by mail to several thousand prospects?

Of course it would cost you hundreds, if not thousands of dollars. And how expensive would it be for you to run a full page ad in a well-known magazine that many of your prospects read frequently? Of course it would cost thousands of dollars. Well, now you can launch a full page, even a multiple page ad anytime you want. And it doesn't cost you anything! It will be distributed worldwide in an instant through search engines, rss feeds and other subscription mechanisms.

Your reach is now global, and while we learn to use these tools, it's very important for us to consider this from the beginning. Blogging and social networking can truly open up new opportunities to you that you had never considered before, because you will have unprecedented reach. And you will also be able to reach customers, quickly and cheaply, that you never would otherwise be able to reach.

For example, I regularly work with fellow business owners and clients in New Zealand, Singapore, Australia, Ireland and other countries. What business do I have working and sharing ideas with these business people and clients? The exact same business I have with people in my network here closer to home. They are great people, valued buyers of my services and have a lot of great ideas to share.

The point is this: distance means nothing anymore. Not when it comes to doing business. I never would have met ANY of these people if I didn't blog. None of them.

Unprecedented Growth Potential

One of the biggest values in using these tools as an integral part of your marketing plan is that you can grow as large as you want, as quickly as you want. Yes, there is a learning curve. But after you learn the basics, you can take your marketing to any extreme you want. There are blog marketers out there that have been in business no longer than a year who command an audience of several hundred thousand visitors a month to their sites.

New Customers

Many small business owners make the mistake of wanting their blog to simply target their local market...something that matches the scope of what they're already doing. This is understandable, and search engine marketing can be used to target any niche, including local geo-specific markets. But to do this is to limit yourself unnecessarily.

A real estate blogger named [Jay Thompson](#) is a terrific example of a locally-based entrepreneur who has leveraged blogging well. [His blog](#) is about his local real estate market but also his state and the national real estate market, and he comments on all sorts of news and topics related to what's going on in real estate. His blog is certainly a cornerstone of his marketing program, and it benefits him

very well. **He doesn't limit himself to just his local market, because he understands that anyone in the world can find his site, so why not take advantage of that?** His work has turned his site into a high traffic property that attracts visitors from all over the world. He has turned his local Phoenix, AZ real estate practice into a global business that benefits people all over the world.

I encourage anyone reading this report who runs any type of locally-based business to look at his blog as an example of what to do right.

Real Flexibility

One of the benefits of blogging that many people overlook is that you can post to your blog any time. You can also go back and change things you've posted in the past.

You can also change the way your blog is configured, and you can change the way it looks. In other words, your blog is truly organic. It can grow with you and your business.

Imagine a print publication running you ad *forever, for free!*

This is more vital than you might realize, because while many of us may think that our business ideas are awesome and will always work for us, the fact is that things change. Markets change. People's wants and needs change. With the current significant economic downturn, which is global, we're aware of this now more than ever.

Having a blog at the center of your marketing system puts huge leverage and flexibility on your side. You can literally change things any time you need to do so. You can change your image, your slogans, your marketing angle. You can launch new products, offer new services. Test new ideas. You can do press releases and let your audience know about changes to your company as they happen. You can take an article that's doing particularly well and go re-tweak it so it generates a lot more leads for you. The possibilities are literally limitless!

In this massively connected world, people *expect* you to be quick and flexible. And markets *demand* you to be able to survive significant shifts in demand from one quarter to the next. With traditional advertising media you simply cannot do this. Blogging is *built* for this!

Product and Service Testing

What if you could release a new product or service to your market having full knowledge in advance that it would be successful? With your blog and social networking, you can do that exact thing, and it is amazingly powerful. Think about it. All you have to do is ask!

You can even pre-market and pre-sell products before they're even launched. Imagine that you want to write a book, for example. Can you imagine what it would be like to have 3,000 copies of it SOLD before you were even finished with the second chapter? This is what some savvy internet marketers do.

Why go through all the time and expense of developing the idea, all the marketing materials, etc...only to find out that no one wants what you're selling? Product research and testing of course is not new phenomenon. They've been around for ages. But it's always been very costly and time consuming. Now, you can do it in a snap.

After you've built your network and are interacting with them regularly, you will see that it's EASY to get people's opinions about things. That's one thing about the social web, people LOVE to tell you what's on their mind!

And the added benefit to you is that if you intentionally leverage this situation, you can save yourself a lot of time and expense, and you can competently and confidently release new products and services to your audience that you know they will buy...because they've already told you they want it!

Manage Your Reputation

In my opinion, this is one of the biggest benefits of taking your online presence seriously. It's not so much related to blogging directly so much as simply being a part of the internet space in your market. You can do much to manage your reputation online even without a blog or a website.

The fact is that whether you're marketing yourself online now or not, your customers ARE online. They're looking for what you sell, and if you have any brand recognition in your market at all, they are talking about you.

Your customers mention you in forums, leave comments on Twitter and other people blogs. The fact is that your brand is being praised

and/or trashed (probably both) online, as we speak. Building a competent, active and strong internet presence in your niche is the equivalent to simply showing up for work. You can't help if you're not there! And if someone complains about you on Twitter, imagine how powerful it would be to get a response from the owner of the company within minutes!

Do you think you might have a chance to turn things around? I think so.

And one thing is for certain, answering a complaint is better than letting it just sit there, unaware it even exists? Is it fair that people are using all these platforms to voice their opinions, forcing you to learn new things in order to keep up with things? Maybe, maybe not. Yet the facts remain the same; it's what's happening! And as business owners, we can choose to get on board, or we can choose to ignore what's going on.

Which do you think is going to win more votes from consumers? Reputation management can be done in a number of different ways, and it's outside the scope of this report to go into the details. But it will be covered on Next Level Blogger in depth as one of the hundreds of free articles posted.

Good Practices

In this section I will describe some of the basics regarding how to get good results from your blogging and social networking. With as much good as you can do for your business through using these tools, you can also get yourself in a lot of trouble and do more damage than good if you use them improperly.

This isn't any different than anything else you've ever done to market your business. Think about email marketing, or print advertising, or radio advertising, etc. They all have rules.

We've all seen horrible TV commercials where we didn't even know what was being sold. Totally ineffective and a waste of time and money. People have been wasting money on bad marketing for as long as marketing has existed. Yet we all also know examples of GREAT marketing. A good marketing piece connects with you and commands a result.

Good blogging and social networking is the same. When done well, it is compelling and very, very effective. When done poorly, it is a turn off and can do more damage than good. I hope this section helps you get started effectively. Let me know if you have any questions...[you know how to reach me!](#)

Have a Plan

Having a plan is key. Many people want to get a website set up very quickly. They want to get it done. But then what? What do you want the site to accomplish? What kind of time are you able and willing to commit to the site? If you're not going to do the regular work to maintain the site and create new content on an ongoing basis, who's going to do it? What topics will you cover? What niche are you targeting? Do you want to make money directly from the site or use the site solely as a branding tool? If you want to monetize, how do you plan to do it? How much traffic do you need to reach your goals? What terms are the customers you want to reach using in search engines? What means are you going to use to get their attention? Display advertising? Search engine optimization? See what I'm talking about?

These are questions you have to have answered BEFORE you build a blog or a website.

Creating an effective plan is one of the bigger areas where I [consult](#) with people, because it's such a huge part of what type of results you're going to get. What type of business can you build without a business plan? You simply need to give it some thought, that's all.

Can you plan every single little detail? Of course not, and I certainly wouldn't recommend it. But it's definitely important to sit down and put pencil to paper and answer some of the basics. Know what goals you want to accomplish and how specifically you aim to accomplish those goals. Having a plan makes a world of difference.

The Art of Not Spamming

Spam is a problem. It's not your fault. But it remains the case, people are hyper-sensitive to spam. HYPER-sensitive. So don't spam. If you do, you will gain no respect, and you will not receive any of the benefits I've described, because people will simply shut you down. The social web is ruthless when it comes to spam. There is an absolute zero tolerance policy.

It's important to know that spam is not only the *textbook definition* of spam but also **anything that can be perceived as spam**. Perception is ALL that matters, because the net result to you is the exact same.

In other words, it pays to be extra wary of doing anything that could even be perceived as spam, because even if what you're doing is not textbook spam, people will STILL unsubscribe, report you as a spammer, blacklist you, block you and take other such measures that will ensure you can never contact them again.

It takes a lot of time to build trust with people and only an instant to destroy it. Online, spam is the quickest way to destroy it.

Many marketers mistakenly think spam refers only to emailing people without their permission. It's a larger issue than that when you approach the social web. People are there to interact with other people. Period. Companies are welcome but must tread lightly. Any form of interruption marketing, misdirection or manipulation of any social platform will most likely be interpreted as spam.

There are many examples of activities that marketers often think are fine but that are not welcome in social media. Here are a few:

- **Posting vague, non-helpful comments on blogs.** Things like “Hey great post!” Everyone knows you get a link back and potential traffic to your site when leaving a comment on someone else’s blog, but commenting purely for the link back and without giving thought to the person’s blog you’re commenting is basically virtual graffiti.
- **Beginning a forum thread with an ad for your services.** Forums are built for conversation. Being overtly promotional in your approach to social media short circuits the social aspect of it, and it is not well-received. Be conversational. Trust me, it takes time but it works like a charm. People really will buy from you, but you have to give them value up front.
- **Posting affiliate links in your Facebook status or on Twitter.** Again, these properties are meant for social networking. The operative word being “social”. If you post things like “hey check this out...” and follow it up with an affiliate link to something you’re selling, then you may get some clicks to your site, and you will also get a lot of people who unfollow you because they perceive this kind of behavior for what it is...interruption marketing. Interruption marketing is the arch nemesis of social networking. You don’t want to be identified with it if you are working to build a brand using social media.
- There are many more examples, but I trust you see where I’m going with this. The idea is that conversation is the focus. If you build your network and genuinely interact with people in these places, you will be in the process of building a very valuable business network. Again, it takes time. The business person in all of us screams to get results NOW. And there is always a time and a place for interruption marketing. But not in social media.

Consistency

Consistency is one of the things that hits a lot of business people by surprise. This is probably the reason that there is such a popular market for tools and utilities of all kinds that virtually “automate” things. I’ve used them all.

Automatic article spinners and submission software, automatic Twitter tools that follow, unfollow, respond to people, etc. You name it, I’ve tried it. It’s part of the business. I’m a professional in this business, so I need to know the market.

Here's the deal: automation has a function, but tread cautiously and always keep in mind that you're dealing with real people. Just because something is quick and easy doesn't mean it's helpful or valuable. This is certainly the case with blogging and social networking.

Building a relationship with a person takes time and effort, no? Well, building relationships online is the same. It takes time and effort. In other words, consistency is key.

If you just set up a blog and some social networking profiles and don't use them, nothing will happen. If you set them up and make them look pretty...nothing will happen. If you check in on them every once in a while and see what's going on...nothing will happen.

However, if you actively get out there and engage people consistently on a regular basis, HUGE things will happen. In other words, having these tools is not going to get it done. Owning a power saw doesn't build you a house. But getting out and using it can make wonderful things happen.

I include this section because so many people I talk with do not seem to understand that me building them a blog is just the very first step. I can build you the most awesome site you've ever seen, but if you're not out there making it work and engaging people, it won't ever be worth much to you. You need to have the tools, but you also need to use them. And the need to use them never goes away. It's a consistent, ongoing effort.

Focus on Value

It's better to give than receive. Social networking and blogging work off this principle. It's a means of establishing trust, and trust is the absolute hottest commodity on the market when it comes to making money online. Without trust, a prospect will not likely buy from you. There are a number of things you can do to create value and build trust with your visitors. Here are some good places to start:

1. Create quality content, specifically written for your target audience.
2. Respond to your comments. Be thoughtful.
3. Respond to your email. Take time to be helpful.
4. Be everywhere. The more your audience sees you "out there", the more your credibility increases.

5. Offer a guarantee for everything you sell. Take all risk upon yourself, leave only value for your customers.
6. Honor your guarantee. It should be just as easy to get a refund as it is to place an order.
7. Don't spam people.
8. Leave thoughtful comments on other blogs. Use comments on other blogs as a conversational tool, not a promotional tool. People know comment spam when they see it. If you think real customers are going to click through your comment spam on other blogs and buying things from you, you're deluding yourself!
9. Be honest.
10. Be consistent.
11. Make your products and services targeted. In other words, don't just produce what you want. Confirm there is a need first. Targeted product creation instills trust, because it speaks directly to your customer. They will really feel like you really know them.
12. Don't post blind, stupid links on [Twitter](#) or in your social networking status. Would YOU click on a link that says "hey check this out! crappyaffiliatelink.tinyurl.com"? I'm not against affiliate marketing of course. Not at all. I'm just saying, blindly blasting out affiliate links, hoping some of them will stick is NOT the way to build trust.
13. Before you post anything, anywhere, ask yourself "Is my goal to create value for my customers, or am I just trying to sell something?"
14. Be around for a while. There's really no getting around this. The longer you are around, the more credibility you'll build and the more your reputation will proceed you. This is a key element of trust, and it takes time.
15. Make your site easy to navigate.
16. Be an active member of other forums or a guest author on other properties that are valued and trusted by your target audience. This is another element of "being everywhere", from #4.
17. Avoid overzealous claims in your sales copy, even if they're true.
18. Don't ignore complaints, and don't be rude...seriously, someone who has taken the time to complain or leave a stupid, hateful comment on your blog is EXACTLY who you want to interact with. They care enough to let you know...99% of the time, it's a simple issue you can resolve immediately with very little effort, and when you do this, you come off like a hero. If you choose to attack back, you will be justified in doing so, and you will also lose at least one customer forever. You can choose between using such an event as an opportunity to grow trust in

your brand, or you can choose to come off looking like a jerk. Your choice!

19. Testimonials. This is a classic. It works, and it will ALWAYS work. Show people proof that your product or service has produced favorable results for others. Produce a system for getting testimonials from your buyers today!
20. Be good. This one might sound like a cop out, but I think it might be the most important one of all. Being good requires constant hard work, networking, staying on top of things and really putting your honest, full effort into your business...every day. These are all things the "gurus" claim they can teach you to skip. Learn all you can from the gurus, but then go out and bust your ass implementing what you've learned. Don't skip the hard stuff, because doing what your competition is not willing to do...that's exactly what will turn the tables in your favor. Can you make money online by doing very little? Yes, you can make chump change that way. Of course, if you're in it for chump change, you're reading the wrong ebook!

These are ways to create value for your visitors. Focus on value, and your visitors will reciprocate. You can read more about my thoughts on [the importance of building trust and creating value](#) on Next Level Blogger.

How to Get Started

No Professional Blogging and Social Networking Roadmap would be complete without a set of actions to take. This section is not to be considered infallible. These are only recommendations. I've built a lot of sites and been through a lot of internet marketing projects, so you can take these tips for what they are...my professional opinion. Of course, there are other ways of doing things. All I can say is that if I were to be starting from the beginning myself, this is what I'd do. Take this advice, and you'll be well on your way to building a successful online marketing system for your business.

Use Self-Hosted Wordpress

There are many blogging platforms. Of course, you won't be surprised at this point to hear me say that you have to have a blog. This really isn't an option if you want to truly connect with and engage your prospects, customers and clients online. It's truly the ultimate branding and marketing tool. It works best when used in

conjunction with other social media tools, and I'll talk a bit about those as well in a minute but for now...just know that your blog will serve as the central hub of everything you do online. Your blog is your home. Let's make it a good one!

That said, which type of blog software should you use? Let me make this quick and painless for you. Use [self-hosted Wordpress](#). Yes, there are other options. I've not found any that are easier to use. Different platforms offer different types of functionality that appeal to different types of users, but I trust as a business person one of your main goals is getting profitable *results* from your blogging. That means pulling in lots of quality traffic and converting as much of that traffic into business as possible.

Wordpress fits the bill. It is highly extensible, very search engine friendly and simple enough to use that almost anyone can learn it. To really tap into the advanced features of Wordpress, you will need to learn some new things most likely, but even an absolute beginner can fire up a Wordpress blog and start writing content right out of the gate.

If you're not familiar with it already, Wordpress is available in two versions: A hosted version (wordpress.com) and a self-hosted version (wordpress.org). The hosted solution will allow you to fire up a blog in just minutes and you'll be up and running.

The upside of using a hosted solution for your blog is that it's quicker and easier. The downside is that you don't actually own your blog. It's on someone else's server. For a business, this is far from ideal.

I maintain a personal blog on a hosted blog platform (I use Blogger personally), but this is purely a blog I maintain for fun. And it truly has no commercial aspirations at all.

If you're doing this to promote your business or to build a business from the ground up, you need your own blog, on your own server, and you need your own domain name. You may not understand all the more advanced features of self-hosted Wordpress right from the start, but trust me. You will want them later on, and you will not be able to truly maximize the results you get when you're at that point if you build your blog on someone else's server.

So bottom line: Installing a self-hosted Wordpress blog involves a few more steps, but consider it very worth your time. It's like building a foundation...it takes more work to build a really hardcore foundation, but it will serve you well years into the future if you take the time to do it right. The self-hosted version of Wordpress is available [here](#).

What's great is that it's free, and wordpress.org has TONS of [documentation](#) and [user forums](#) which will show you exactly what to do. They also offer thousands of [plugins and themes](#) that can make Wordpress do pretty much anything you can imagine.

One way to get the best of both worlds is to [hire me as a consultant](#) ;) I'm happy to set up your self-hosted Wordpress blog for you. This will cut the learning curve out, and you'll be up and running in no time. Ideally, it's best to learn to do it yourself, but if you want to get things going quickly, that is one solution.

What Social Networks to Use

Again, I'm going to give it to you straight...this is just my opinion, but it's a great way to start. Let's just keep it simple and get results right out of the gate without letting things be more complicated than they need to be. Sound fair?

I think one of the main problems (and one of the main reasons a lot of professionals fail to ever get the results they want from online marketing) is that there are SO many options, it's overwhelming. Sometimes it's just necessary to cut through the B.S. and get things done.

Step one: Set up a [Facebook](#) profile.

Step two: Set up a [Twitter](#) account.

Step Three: Use these profiles regularly, in the manner I've described in this report.

That's it!

Are there other social networks worth checking out? Heck yes. Can you get some good results with other social networks? Again, heck yes! This is not all there is. It's a *starting* point. But these two are pretty much the biggest, most effective tools at your disposal. They're free, they're highly effective marketing venues (when used tactfully, as I've discussed earlier), and with just these two you can truly do a lot of damage.

I've used em all, and at the end of the day aside from Google and a handful of smaller search engines, Facebook and Twitter send me a very significant portion of the traffic I get to Next Level Blogger.

Other social networks that have given me notable results in terms of traffic to my site and leads for my business:

1. [StumbleUpon](#)
2. [ActiveRain](#)
3. [FriendFeed](#)

Really, that's it. And to be honest, if I lost all the traffic from these three, it would not ruin my day. I'll take it! But it's not overwhelming.

In my experience every little bit helps, and if you do a hundred little things that help just a little bit, those tiny successes add up to big results. For that reason, adding more social networks over time will be necessary as you build your business. But to start, Facebook and Twitter will enable you to build a truly formidable network. They are the place to start.

Here's The Deal with Twitter

I'm regularly met with some confusion when it comes to Twitter. Those not on Twitter cannot imagine why strangers would possibly want to follow them and hear about the mundane details of their day. Do you really think people who don't know you care what you're having for breakfast? What real value could Twitter possibly have for building your business?

First of all, Twitter is a social network, so most people are there purely for social purposes. They follow their real friends, and they network and find others with common interests and follow each other. Think of it as a huge party, and everyone's invited. How does your business fit in, and how can you get meaningful results by using Twitter?

Think about these things you can do with Twitter, and I'm sure you'll see why Twitter has become an indispensable tool for businesses these days:

- You can keep constant tabs on everything people say about you and your brand.
- You can contact everyone in your network once, twice or even several times a day and keep in personal contact with thousands of people easily, quickly and for free.

- There are millions of people on Twitter...all in one place in an easily searchable and digestible configuration. In years past, salespeople and business owners have paid thousands of dollars to be able to access a database like this. Twitter is free!
- You can not only keep in touch with your base easily and cheaply but also massively GROW your contact base, meeting and conversing with as many people as you like...all interested in the same things as you or prime prospects for what your business offers.

The value to businesses such as yours is obvious. So what do you tweet about? You share relevant information that pertains to your business. Industry news, new posts to your blog, new posts to other people's blogs. You can comment on things happening in your industry or in your local office. You can tweet out a link to a discount coupon and promote your business that way. You can tweet out questions to your followers and get their opinions on different ideas you're considering using to promote a new product or service. And yes, you can tweet out personal thoughts, ideas, where you're going to dinner that night...one of the best ways to get a feel for it is to get on board and follow some people you find interesting. The possibilities are limitless!

How to Measure Your Results

One of the biggest hurdles I see professionals come up against in the pursuit of making money and expanding their business online is that they find it hard to quantify their results. This is understandable, because the process of establishing yourself online takes a little while, and if you're not sure what you're doing, the process can seem unending. You work and work every day, and you constantly wonder when you're going to start seeing results.

So my goal here is to give you a formula you can use to get results. This comes from my direct sales background. I know from my sales training experience that you need to make business success easy to understand. We need to see measurable improvements every day. We need to know we're being effective and moving toward our goals.

Here's what I can show you. First, I cannot tell you that you'll be getting x-amount of traffic by x-amount of days from starting your online marketing. It doesn't work that way. Every market is different, every site is different, etc. Not all niches are high traffic niches, and

depending on your goals, it's very possible (even probable) that you don't even NEED huge traffic to reach your goals. What you DO need is to be a true force in your market place. You need to pull in the amount of traffic necessary, and you need to make sure you convert that traffic in order to reach your goals.

So here is my very simple formula to ensure that you're moving in the write direction every day.

1. Write every day.
2. Respond to inquiries promptly, professionally and thoughtfully
3. Build links every day.

So let me expand on each of these...

Write Every Day

My personal goal is 5 pieces a day. By "pieces", I mean 5 pages, 5 videos, 5 guest posts, etc. Or of course it could be 3 blog posts and 2 videos. It could be 1 blog post, 1 guest post and 3 articles for other sites. You see where this is going...I don't only produce written articles, but I need to produce content every day. So do you.

You likely do not need to focus on 5 pieces a day. That is a lot. The reason I do 5 pieces a day is because the MAJORITY of what I do is online. In other words, this is where I work. Many of you are in other fields. For example: real estate, attorneys, network marketers, etc. You may have a very large part of your business established in other areas besides the internet. Those areas are going to keep you busy as well, and you might not have time to do 5 pieces a day.

Also, keep in mind that a big part of my monetization plan is the production of information products. In other words, while I consider it essential to produce content for my business blog on a regular basis, I am also busy creating ebooks and other information products which I sell. So that's a lot of writing, and in order to meet launch dates I often have to be very busy writing every day. It's what I do.

My point is that what I do is not exactly what you need to do...but you DO need to have a goal to write every day, and it needs to be specific. Perhaps you want to set a goal to write one blog post every day. That is awesome. Make it ambitious, and make it doable. But producing content on a regular basis (whether it's written content,

videos, etc) is essential. It's part of being consistent and focusing on value...things I mentioned earlier in this report.

Write every day. When you do this, you will know that you're constantly putting yourself out there. That is a huge step to attracting business your way.

One important note: don't be fooled into assuming this needs to take a lot of time. A blog post can be written in 10 minutes. If it's genuine and helpful, that's all that matters. This stuff does not need to take all day! It just needs to get done.

Respond to Inquiries Promptly, Professionally and Thoughtfully

This step is essential, because if you want to do business and make money online, you need to work with people...and people want to hear back from you! Make it part of your schedule to promptly respond to any inquiries you get.

I'd like to think this is common sense. After all, you've just worked so hard building your presence online and producing content day after day, and then finally someone expresses interest in what you're doing, and you don't bother to respond to them. Believe it: many studies have shown that MOST inquiries do not get a response, or if they do, it is several days later. This is not any way to run a business.

As we all know, any chain is only as strong as it's weakest link. And this is a vital link in the chain. People want a response, and they want it quickly. This of course includes people who contact you because they want you to speak at their next sales meeting, and they're willing to pay you \$5k.

It ALSO includes people who just want to ask you a quick question. Because, who knows when those seemingly insignificant little questions will turn into a business partnership, a lucrative advertising deal, a high paying purchase or anything else you're shooting for.

Bottom line: check your email!

Build Links Every Day

Search engines like links. And visitors USE links. They use them to find your site. There's always a lot of talk about the value of search engine traffic, and that's understandable, but the number one way people find your site is through links...ANY kind of link.

You can work to get search engines to link you up, and that is important. You can also create your OWN inbound links that point to your site. This kills two birds with one stone, because the more inbound links you have to your site, the more traffic you'll get, and those links will also translate into search engines as seeing your site as more relevant.

So in other words, work to build the number of links pointing in to your site every day. Do this, and you will know you're consistently improving your network, growing your traffic and moving in the right direction.

Set a number of links you want to create every day, then go do it. There are two ways to get links. Passively and actively. It is beyond the scope of this report to go into huge detail on how to do this, but passive inbound link building involves things like simply writing a great article on your blog. It's great, so people will naturally link to it on their own. That is passive link building. What I'm talking about here is active link building.

Active link building involves you going to different places and putting a link to your site. Fortunately there are TONS of ways to do this, and it's quick and easy. Set a rule for yourself that you will create 10,20,30 or however many links you're comfortable doing, and do it every day.

Where can you go to create links to your blog? It's easy. Here are a few:

1. **Article sites** – sites like [Ezine Articles](#), [Go Articles](#) and others will allow you to write a simple article, and they provide a link back to your site. Many article sites out there will allow you to create an account for free and build a "resource box" that will follow any article you post. That resource box will link back to your site. Post an article, get a link. Pretty cool, huh? Other article sites include: [Article Dashboard](#), [Search Warp](#), [Articles Base](#).
2. **Comment a blog** – post a comment on a blog. Especially a blog that is related to your blog. This is a simple way to post a

link. Any comment you leave on most blogs will allow you to include your url. Some critics may say that not all of these links will act beneficially to you with reference to search engine positioning, and that is true. Most blogs contain “no-follow” scripts, so your link may not be read by search engines as an incoming link. Nevertheless, it IS an inbound link, and if you write a helpful comment on someone’s blog, it is likely that it will translate into traffic back to you.

3. **Squidoo** – this is a large network of writers and business people of all kinds. You can create pages, called “lenses” that can become authoritative resources on any subject you can imagine. Of course, any lenses you create can easily link back to your blog.
4. **Yahoo Answers** – it’s fairly simple to visit <http://answers.yahoo.com> and find people asking questions about your topic of interest. You can then simply...answer their question. You need to set up a profile on Yahoo first. It’s free. And you can typically answer 10-20 questions a day quickly and easily, and of course you can link back to content on your site when appropriate. I’ve found the Yahoo Answers community to be VERY active and busy. There are always plenty of questions to answer. You will probably need to wade through a lot of really vague and silly questions, but it’s a great way to get links and meet new people.
5. **Forums** – there are undoubtedly many forums in existence right now that revolve around content applicable to your niche. You can frequent these forums, commenting, starting threads and giving advice to other users. I’ve found forums a great way to make really good personal and business contacts as well as getting traffic to your site. You can link up content on your site when appropriate. In addition, most forums allow you to have a signature which will post at the bottom of any of your comments, and you can use this to link out to your blog.

These are just a few ways to build links. There’s a lot more out there, but you get the idea. **The main thing is to get out there and involved in your community.** You can easily consider anyone talking about or interested in your niche as part of your community, and it’s simple to use search engines and social networks to find these people. The more you get involved, the more opportunity you will have to create links to your site, and the more links you create, the more your site will become integrated and vital to your community.

Techniques and Tricks

Since this report is about blogging and social networking, I felt it was a good idea to pick up some simple technical tricks and tools I've used along the way to make life easier. If something makes you more effective, I'm all for trying it out. At this point, I feel as if I've tried pretty much everything. Here are a few things that work for me...

Keeping Up With Your Social Networking Profiles

As with anything these days, there are countless options and new things coming on the market every day. So it's impossible for me to write this section without hearing waves of protest in my mind! I can already hear the complaints as to why I didn't include this or that.

Let me just say this: I'm a big fan of any tool that is going to make better use of my time. So I will always be up for trying new things. But at this point, I have a philosophy about things...if it's new and is going to have a learning curve, it better have a significant improvement upon what I'm already doing. Down time is killer, and I avoid it like the plague.

I have several social networking profiles, as many of you do as well (or at least you should), and one challenge is keeping them up to date. Status updates and the like. How can you possibly visit each of these profiles regularly throughout the day and keep things up to date? It's doable, but it's not realistic. Plus, there are way better uses of your time. So here is the solution I've worked out for myself. It works for me, and I invite you to give it a whirl.

1. I visit Facebook a couple times a day. It is my primary social network. I encourage you to have a focus as well. It doesn't need to be Facebook. It just needs to be a very active place where you have a lot of contacts.
2. I set email notifications on all my other social media profiles, so I get an email if there's something that needs a response. I NEVER visit Myspace, ActiveRain, FriendFeed, etc...unless I have something specific that I need to do there.
3. I use <http://ping.fm>. You can create a profile there for free, and it allows you to create one status update and post it to all your social profiles all at once. It also allows you to post links,

pictures, blog posts, pretty much anything else you'd want to do on any of your profiles...and you can do it all from one location. Pretty nice!

These steps keep all my profiles updated regularly, and all my messages get prompt responses without me having to do any repetitive checking and rechecking of my profiles.

Twitter Tools

Here are a few tools I use for maintaining my Twitter account. Your Twitter stream, unless you follow only a few people and have only a few followers, can quickly become an onslaught of information that is nearly impossible to keep up with. These tools make it a snap.

Tweetdeck

There are a million "twitter tools" to use these days of course, but I like to keep B.S. to a minimum. By now, hopefully you've absorbed my perspective on this type of thing...I like to keep automation and such to a minimum, because nothing replaces actual human interaction. When it comes to sustainable and predictable growth and success at making money online, the best way to do it is through real relationships, and that stuff cannot be automated. However, some things just stand out as real time savers, and this is the kind of tool I recommend.

The one Twitter tool I fully recommend is [Tweetdeck](#). It's a Twitter client that allows you to read your Twitter feed on your desktop. The reason it is so awesome is because it splits everything into it's own column, and it allows you to make sense of the thousands of incoming messages. For most people, if you follow more than a few people that is, Twitter quickly becomes confusing. Tweetdeck organizes it all for you, and it's completely customizable. It even allows you to save searches. For example, I have a column in Tweetdeck which is a saved search for "Next Level Blogger", so anytime someone mentions my blog, I see the update...even if it's not someone I happen to be following at that point.

Also, Tweetdeck is easy to install, and it's free. Can't beat it!

Tweetlater

[Tweetlater](#) is another tool I recommend trying out. I use it on occasion but not all the time. There are some features to avoid. For example, Tweetlater will allow you to automatically follow everyone on Twitter who follows you. This is, unfortunately, a great way to end up following a lot of spammers and such. I recommend avoiding this feature.

Tweetlater also lets you automatically send a direct message to anyone who follows you (it's called an auto -DM). On the surface, this seems like it may be a good idea, but I highly recommend never turning this feature on. Most legitimate users of Twitter consider auto-DMs spam. Many people will unfollow you if they receive an auto-DM from you. These really do save you time, but they are unpersonalized, and therefore in social media, are not welcome.

One feature Tweetlater offers which is definitely something that can add some juice to your Twitter efforts on occasion is the ability to schedule tweets to go out later. I will sometimes use this by sitting down and scheduling up a number of tweets that I'd like to go out throughout the course of the day. That way I can get it all done in 5 minutes in one sitting, instead of having to be on Twitter all day.

This may seem silly on the surface, but there are good reasons for this in some circumstances. For example, I've learned that statistically most of my real estate contacts are on Twitter in the early afternoon. If I'm tweeting something out that I know is particularly relevant to that audience, I will use Tweetlater to fire that out at about noon or so, instead of tweeting it out right then, when it will likely not be read or seen by the intended audience.

Also, if I have a particularly important tweet that I want to make sure gets seen, I will use Tweetlater to repeat a tweet later in the day. Why tweet out the same message twice? I don't expect every one of my thousands of followers to hang on every word I have to say 24/7! I repeat it because I know later in the day, the tweet will go out to a completely different group of followers :) I hardly do this for every tweet, but I will do this occasionally, and it works well!

Twitterfeed

This is a highly recommended tool to use for blog promotion. I have not always spoken highly of [Twitterfeed](#), but I still recommend it. Here is why: I shy away from most automation tools, because the fact is that nothing replaces the personal touch. I truly believe that. That said, when used on occasion and with tact, they can save you time, and saving time is a GOOD thing! Twitterfeed basically hooks up to your blog via your RSS feed, and it will tweet out your latest blog posts without you having to do a thing.

It's certainly a good idea to tweet out a link to your latest blog posts, so everyone knows you've posted something new to your blog. Twitter can be a great source of traffic to your blog, and directly tweeting out links on occasion is a great way to keep your followers up to date. Keep in mind that many readers do not subscribe to your blog via RSS, and they depend on Twitter as a means of keeping up to date. I learned this from conducting surveys with my readers, and I've been told this directly from readers...they WANT me to tweet out links to my blog. So why the heck wouldn't I?

Twitterfeed will do this for you automatically, and it's fairly easy to configure it to behave just how you want, so I highly recommend this tool.

Writing tips

When it comes to writing content for your blog, so many newbies feel it's necessary to adopt some sort of unnatural, professional tone. This is part of the beauty of blogging. It's personal, remember? Just be yourself. Look at the tone of this report; it's completely casual and not formal at all. If I had to be journalistic and completely proper when writing for my blog or the information products I develop, I'd be screwed!

I don't particularly recommend using profanity very often (although some very successful bloggers do; it's a personal choice), but the point is to be yourself. Don't overly stress yourself when it comes to producing content for your blog. The important things are to create value, and if you're quoting someone or getting valuable information from another source, give credit and link back to them. Besides that you DON'T have to be a professional writer.

Use spell check and be reasonable with your grammar. If you're writing is ULTRA-casual to the point that it becomes difficult and distracting to read, you're hurting yourself, but if you act like yourself and exercise reasonable care with what you're publishing, it's not necessary to feel like you need to do much more than that. People are not reading your blog as if it were a piece of classic literature. They're reading it to get to know you and learn what you have to share.

There are obvious exceptions to this. Of course if you're an English professor, you might want to be a little more careful with your grammar for example. But for the vast majority of cases, simply being yourself is all you need to worry about.

A Word About Writing for People vs Search Engines

Writing for search engines implies loading up your copy with keywords to make sure search engines find your writing as relevant for certain keywords. I believe in being deliberate in your approach. Use keywords. A lot of bloggers out there will recommend just writing for your visitors, and that SEO will take care of itself. There is a lot of truth to that, and I believe that if you simply use a well-designed blog, write good content regularly and build links (as described earlier), SEO will largely never be a concern. It will take care of itself.

But the fact is that there ARE steps you can take to ensure you show up for certain keywords. If this is important to you, go for it. Keep in mind that SEO is a complex field and it may not be worth your time to take it on. You can read my post on [Are You Wasting Time on SEO?](#) to determine how you feel about it. You can also [hire me](#) to do SEO work on your site if you like. But if you want to undertake it yourself, I surely don't advise against it like some people do. Writing for search engines and being deliberate in your approach to show up for keywords that are important to you can lead to very impressive, profitable results.

Your keywords and other SEO work should never be overbearing or confuse your readers. I've been to a lot of blogs that rank really well in Google. And then as soon as I land on the site, it's obviously written solely for search engines. Yeah, they got me to visit; they probably get a lot of traffic, and I guarantee they get almost NO repeat traffic! They also get no subscribers. So what's the point?

If you want to just write for your readers, you will STILL get good results if you're running a well-designed blog. The reason is that you're using keywords left and right whether you're trying to or not. Believe me if you're writing valuable content that other people want to read, people will find your site. SEO can help it along and help you get better results faster, but it's not absolutely *mandatory* for most blogs.

Using an Ebook to Promote Your Business

Some things just work, period. And anyone involved with business knows that giving away something free is almost ALWAYS a good idea. I very much recommend considering implementing this idea on your blog also. Most blogs have a specific goal. Perhaps you want to get people to sign up for your email list. Maybe your focus is getting direct inquiries about a service or product you sell. Maybe you are going straight for the sale and want your blog to sell directly to consumers right on the site. Whatever your goal is, use a premium like an ebook to entice action.

Writing a blog is a lot of work. It takes daily vigilance. You compile content over time, and one of the ways you can leverage that is to pull it all together into an ebook. If you've been running a business...and ESPECIALLY if you've been writing a blog for a year or more, you've probably already written your ebook! It just needs to be pulled together, and edited a bit. Pick your favorite, most popular or most powerful content, and offer it all packaged together in the form of an ebook.

Face it, you're an expert in your field, and people find value in what you know. I've seen an ebook transform the conversion rate on a blog more than a few times. Offer something free, and get much in return. Take away all doubt that your new subscribers and customers will be getting more than enough value to compensate for whatever you're asking in return.

One of the most valuable things any business owner can offer their customers is a little window into their expertise. An ebook is an excellent and free way to do this. It will take a bit of your time, but it will pay you back many times over through higher conversion rates, more traffic to your blog and more praise and referrals from your customers.

When you put an ebook up on your site as a premium, make sure to email your list about it, tweet it out to all your followers and

otherwise make sure that everyone in your network knows about it! I guarantee you'll be pleasantly surprised how much of a reaction you can get with this technique.

I've seen professionals and business owners in all different fields apply this technique successfully. Tech bloggers, network marketers, coaches, authors, musicians, financial planners, attorneys, real estate professionals and more...anyone can implement this with a little effort, and it's one of the internet's proven ways of getting a great kick start to results from your blog.

What do you think you're reading right now? :)

New Ways to Make Money

Most people currently active in blogging do not consider blogging a new medium, but the fact is that it hasn't been around much longer than 10 years. The fact that 10 years is considered old is really telling if you ask me! Newspapers and other media have been around for many decades of course, and of course they're still around, but they're changing.

Bottom line: change is the name of the game. It's time to learn these new tools, but it's also time to profit from them! What's fun and exciting is that there are a number of ways to monetize your blogging activities...it may require you to stretch your mind a bit, but if you're willing to explore the possibilities, you just may have some very significant money-making opportunities staring you right in the face that you may not have thought of before!

Information Products

Just as I've described ebooks as a great way to promote and spread your blog around virally, they are also a great way to make money. If you're are running a blog or looking at the prospect of starting one, you are certainly an expert in something. You have something to say. Write it down...and sell it. It's an age old concept.

What's fun about ebooks is that they are in high demand, as long as the content is top notch, and they are infinitely reproducible. In other words, a LOT of people are willing to pay to get a piece of your expertise, as long as you're willing to take some time writing it up and making it look nice. And the cost to distribute it is effectively

ZERO! An ebook is a digital product, so once you're created it, you can sell one, or two, or one or two million of them, and the cost is the same...ZERO :)

What does this mean? It means that your overhead is as low as possible, so there is no risk at all except some of your time. Even if you sell only 1,000 copies of your ebook for \$27, that's \$27k. That's a pretty nice European vacation :)

Many professionals do not consider doing this because they feel it has nothing to do with their business. Going with the real estate example, simply because of my personal experience in that field, most Realtors will never put out an ebook, because they feel their main job is selling property. And as long as they keep thinking that, they will be right.

But as soon as you start building your blog, you will realize that a lot of your dedicated readers are not your direct customers! They are people who simply find your expertise valuable for one reason or another. Monetize it!

This is just part of the paradigm of blogging; every business is a global business. If you're a Realtor or attorney, or industrial salesperson, etc...based in Washington, it's unlikely you're going to make any direct sales to your readers who are not in Washington. But it is a FACT that you will have MANY readers who are not in Washington. And to me, my friends, that is a business opportunity! Isn't that a beautiful thing?

Of course it is your choice; it's completely up to you if you want to take advantage of that opportunity or not. But I'm of the opinion that if there's an opportunity for me to make a quick \$20-30k...I'm gonna take it :) And who knows...go and write something really great, and it could end up taking your business in an entirely different direction that you never would have thought possible before! Yes, blogging is *that* powerful! But only if you *work* it :)

A Word on Advertising

Yes, you can make money from advertising on your blog. This is the most common way to monetize a blog, and I certainly recommend looking into it. I make money from some advertising for sure. But here is the thing: most small business owners don't understand that you need a LOT of traffic to make any significant amount of money from ads.

Also, consider that most visitors will consider ads to diminish their user experience. Even if that lowering of the quality of the user experience is minor, it might just not be worth it to you given the amount of money you'll make.

Most popular blogs have ads of some kind. If you're pulling in tens of thousands of visitors a month or more and you want to explore the advertising option, I encourage you to do so. But if you're getting a few thousand visitors or so, as many small business blogs do, I would not have you waste your time with it.

I've written on Next Level Blogger a number of times about this. I've had a number of sites with only a small amount of traffic, and they were VERY profitable sites. They sell services or products which I control myself, and occasionally I will sell affiliate products as well, but if I were to be dependent upon advertising revenues on these sites I would literally be broke.

Bottom line: don't make the assumption that advertising is the way to make money from your blog. It works if you're getting a ton of traffic, but even then, there are much more profitable ways to monetize, and it is a rare blog indeed that makes the bulk of it's income from ads. Advertising is a nice way to pay some bills, but you would need billions of page views a month (that's billions with a "b") to get rich from advertising alone.

The subject of how to monetize and get impressive profits from your blogging and social networking is of course the focus of Next Level Blogger, so if monetizing your blog directly is of interest to you, I encourage you to [subscribe to Next Level Blogger](#). I cover this subject in depth on a regular basis.

Speaking and Consultation

This is another area I encourage you to explore! Many times, professionals from other organizations will see your blog, and if they find your content particularly helpful, insightful or valuable for their organization, you may find yourself being invited to speak on a certain topic. This is the type of opportunity that blogging can open up for you.

Of course, you can turn down the gig if you like. But I encourage you to think about it and even put up a page on your blog that addresses this head on. Tell people you're available to speak at their sales convention, office training session, etc. For a fee, of course. Many

locally based business owners and professionals would never consider the option of getting paid to speak on a certain topic. Think about it, if you're writing content that is helpful to others, there are surely others still who would love to see you in person.

Public speaking and personal appearances are of course not for everyone, and you may very well not be interested in pursuing that type of thing at all. And if not, that is completely fine. It is simply one of many examples of opportunities that may present themselves to you throughout the course of promoting your blog.

Get Help

One of my hopes for this report is to open some eyes and get some of you excited about using a blog and social networking to promote your business. The fact is that this stuff is not rocket science. You can do it! And the effects of using these tools can literally transform what you do and how you think about your business.

It's not just about selling more, although you CAN certainly increase sales. It's about taking your business to the next level. It's no mystery why I call my blog [Next Level Blogger!](#)

One of the most powerful things you can do to help yourself along is to [hire me for a consult](#). This is a paid service, and you can learn more about it [here](#).

We can cover any of these topics or more:

- Build or promote your blog (I can build your blog for you or show you how)
- How to use social media to improve your business
- Sales tactics
- Business planning
- How to increase sales
- How to make more money online
- How to convert more leads
- Get more traffic to your site
- SEO

With So Much Free Information Online, Why Should I Hire You?

First, I recommend that you DO take advantage of as much free information as possible. That's the primary reason I write a blog for you, and that's why I offer resources such as this report which took me many hours to prepare. So read up!

That said, we all know that it takes years to become an expert in something. If you have a lot of time to solve a specific issue with your business, then doing it yourself is actually the best approach.

But sometimes you need help to turn things around much more quickly than that. Every top performer in any niche...has a coach of some sort and requires a consult from time to time. **Coaching and consultation is a vital part of running a successful business. There simply is not a better way to improve your productivity quickly.**

If you want to maximize your results with blogging, internet marketing or social media, and you want to get things going promptly, I encourage you to [contact me](#) about a possible consult. In an hour or two, we can get a LOT done, and **you'll walk away with an action plan custom tailored to your specific business.**

Recommended Resources

In this section, I want to provide you with a list of reading material and resources that I highly recommend. A lot of these are blog posts that are very valuable resources to anyone starting with these tools. Some of these are books and other products and services...all of which I use personally, and some of the links are affiliate links. **Yes, I do get a commission when you buy one.** I practice what I preach...I make money online!

I do encourage you to check these out...there's a lot here! My goal is to really load you up with resources, so you come back and refer to this page often. There really are some game changing articles and books here, so please take the time to hack away at this stuff. Trust me, you'll thank me for it!

Highly Recommended Articles That Will Step Up Your Game

1. [How Twitter Made My Website Better](#)
2. [How to make money using the Internet](#)
3. [The Number 1 Way To Make Money Online](#)
4. [What is a Blog?](#)
5. [How to Write Your “About Me” Page](#)
6. [How Bloggers Make Money from Blogs](#)
7. [How I Make \\$40,000 a Month From a Blog](#)
8. [How Much Is A Domain Name Worth?](#)
9. [The Art Of Link Baiting](#)
10. [My Top 10 Best Wordpress Plugins](#)
11. [Why RSS Is Bad](#)
12. [A Step-By-Step Blog Launch Plan and Roadmap](#)
13. [How Long Does It Take To Start Making Money Online?](#)
14. [The Secret To Attracting More Comments On Your Blog](#)
15. [Which Is More Secure – The 9-5 Job Or Self-Employment?](#)
16. [How To Never Run Out of Content For Your Blog Again](#)
17. [How to Set Up A Blog \(For the Long Run\)](#)
18. [How to Sell from Your Blog \(The Ultra-Basics\)](#)
19. [Why Blog Marketing is Cheap Marketing](#)
20. [The Top 10 Ways to NOT Launch a Blog](#)
21. [How to Begin Blogging When You Don't Know Where to Start](#)
22. [Create a Blog Pack to Get Blog Traffic and Increase Subscriptions](#)
23. [Do You Reward Your Visitors?](#)
24. [Using Stats to Improve Your Traffic](#)
25. [What's Your Google Disaster Plan?](#)
26. [How I Doubled My Blog Traffic in 2 Months](#)
27. [5 Easy Traffic Building Tips](#)
28. [To the people who told me that I will never make it in Life](#)
29. [Reasons why to become a Self Made Millionaire](#)
30. [Tell People What You Want Them to Do for You](#)
31. [What You Don't Publish, Defines Your Site](#)
32. [How to Become an Authority in Your Niche: Eight Content Development Tactics](#)
33. [6 Fool-Proof Steps to Make More Money With Your Website](#)
34. [Creating a Definitive Blueprint for a Profitable Blog: A Community Ebook Idea](#)
35. [Samantha Ettus interviews “The Social Media Sommelier” Gary Vaynerchuk](#)
36. [Make Money Blogging – Lesson 1\(series\)](#)
37. [Thoughts on writing timeless blog posts and post bylines](#)
38. [Top 18 most downloaded WordPress plugins ever](#)
39. [How one blog comment can bring you 230+ unique visitors](#)

40. [How Gary Vaynerchuk built a multi-million dollar empire around a video blog](#)
41. [How To Get Repeat Visitors To Your Website](#)
42. [Never Trust a Silent Customer](#)
43. [How to Get Customers to Beg for Your Business Card?](#)
44. [Stuck With A Zero Marketing Budget?](#)
45. [How To Double Your Sales \(Over And Over Again\)](#)
46. [How To Stop Regretting The Past And Start Building Your Future](#)
47. [How To Make Time When There Is No Time](#)
48. [Three Simple Cheats To Free Up Five Hours This Week](#)
49. [What People Trying To Make Money Online Blogging Don't Get](#)
50. [My Top 10 Worst Ideas To Make Money](#)
51. [The Three Ds That Will Make or Break Your Blogging Career – Desire](#)
52. [‘Hustling’ to Get What You Want](#)
53. [25 Paths to an Insanely Popular Blog](#)
54. [The One True Cause of Rapidfire Growth](#)
55. [Please God, I Want To Be A Salesman At Verizon Wireless](#)
56. [Which Came First? Your Black Card or Your Book?](#)
57. [The Shortest “How To Make Millions” Blog Post Ever Written...](#)
58. [Entrepreneurship: What To Do When You're Scared Sh*tless](#)
59. [How We Killed Social Media](#)
60. [How to Make Money From Your Blog](#)
61. [How to Make Lots of Money During a Recession](#)
62. [How to Build a High-Traffic Web Site \(or Blog\)](#)
63. [Stages Of Buyer Awareness](#)
64. [Applying Scarcity And Urgency](#)
65. [Telling Compelling Stories](#)
66. [The Power Of Niche Marketing](#)
67. [Biggest Mistakes Writers Make](#)
68. [Twitter for Beginners: 5 Steps for Better Tweeting](#)
69. [10 Twitter Best Practices for Brands](#)
70. [FOLLOW FAIL: The Top 10 Reasons I Will Not Follow You in Return on Twitter](#)
71. [HOW TO: Use Social Media for Enterprise Business](#)
72. [FACEBOOK FAIL: How to Use Facebook Privacy Settings and Avoid Disaster](#)
73. [HOW TO: Manage Multiple Social Media Profiles](#)
74. [Personal Branding 101: How to Discover and Create Your Brand](#)
75. [Top 10 WordPress Plugins to Promote Your Social Media Profiles](#)
76. [20 of the Best SEO Plugins for WordPress](#)
77. [30+ Tools to Turn Wordpress into a Personal Hub](#)
78. [3 Ways to Make More Money Blogging](#)
79. [7 Tools For Blogging On Your Phone](#)
80. [Top 10 Free E-books For Bloggers](#)
81. [40+ Free Blog Hosts](#)

82. [30+ WordPress Plugins To Get More Blog Readers](#)
83. [Winning on the uphill](#)
84. [The difference between strangers and friends](#)
85. [Find your voice](#)
86. [Two ways to build trust](#)
87. [You matter](#)
88. [Harvesting](#)
89. [Understanding The New Advertising Environment \[i.e. Social Networks, Blogs, SEO\]](#)
90. [Content for Your Business Blog](#)
91. [Can I Manage My Own Free Business Blog?](#)
92. [Online, Only Blogs Establish Brand!](#)
93. [5 Things To Know Before Setting Up Your Business Blog](#)
94. [How Blogging Markets Your Business](#)
95. [Successful business blogging in just one step](#)
96. [Use Twitter to Lay Groundwork for Your Business Blog](#)
97. [Small Business Blogging Part 1: Finding Your Niche](#)
98. [Blogging is Good for Your Business](#)
99. [Get Your Small Business Involved in Social Media](#)
100. [Most Popular Social Networking Sites for Business](#)

Books That Will Rock Your World

1. [ProBlogger: Secrets for Blogging Your Way to a Six-Figure Income](#)
2. [The New Rules of Marketing and PR: How to Use News Releases, Blogs, Podcasting, Viral Marketing and Online Media to Reach Buyers Directly](#)
3. [WordPress For Dummies](#)
4. [The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference](#)
5. [Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us](#)
6. [Guerrilla Marketing, 4th edition: Easy and Inexpensive Strategies for Making Big Profits from Your SmallBusiness](#)
7. [The New Community Rules: Marketing on the Social Web](#)

Recommended Products and Resources

1. [Next Level Blogger blog, sales and marketing consultation](#)
2. [Aweber email marketing](#)
3. [Bluehost web hosting](#)

If You Ever Have Questions...

I encourage you to [contact me](#) if you ever want to bounce any questions off me, collaborate on an idea or business opportunity, etc. I love hearing from my readers, and I'm excited to help as many people as possible meet their business goals through the use of these new media tools. I honestly believe business will never be the same!

You know how to reach me!



Christian Russell
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The Fantastically Simple Rules of Blogging for Business Success!
blog: <http://nextlevelblogger.com/about>
twitter: <http://twitter.com/christiantjr>
facebook: <http://facebook.com/christiantjr>
friendfeed: <http://friendfeed.com/christianrussell>